

SIPCOT Area Community Environmental Monitors

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Victory Chemicals gifts Hazardous Waste to Cuddalore On Bhopal Anniversary

CUDDALORE, 6th December 2004: SIPCOT Area Community Environmental Monitors have urged the Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board to revoke the license of Victory Chemicals – a SIPCOT-based explosives manufacturer – for illegally dumping toxic wastes in S.N. Chavadi village, New Town, Cuddalore. At least 100 lorry loads of wastes were dumped on 3 December, the 20th anniversary of the Bhopal disaster. Officials of the Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board who visited the site on 4 December claim to have cleaned up the site. However, SACEM verified that only 10 lorryloads were removed and returned to the company. The remainder was covered with red mud and gravel and levelled as part of the road construction activities in the area. SACEM members who visited the dumpsite on 5 December found substantial quantities of the residues spread around the site. Local people report a persistent chemical odour, and dust pollution with every passing vehicle. Improper clean-up can expose resident communities and their livestock (cattle, chicken etc) to poisoning.

Dumping of toxic wastes in the open is a criminal offence. The Supreme Court has issued strict directions to State Pollution Control Boards requiring the Boards to take stringent statutory action against violators. “While it is heartening to note that the Pollution Control Board has acted promptly to contain the damage, we fear that the clean-up has not been properly done. Also, it is imperative that criminal action is initiated against Victory Chemicals and their license is revoked,” SACEM said.

Earlier this year, a child died after consuming date-expired medicine dumped on the roadside near Semmankuppam. In November, a damaged pipeline spilled toxic effluents onto public lands near Pioneer Chemicals. No action was taken against the company for this violation either.

SACEM has said it will pursue criminal action against Victory Chemicals, and also follow up with the Supreme Court Monitoring Committee on Hazardous Wastes.

For more, details contact:

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